

Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Board sends '04 budget to messengers

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) on August 26 voted unanimously to submit a proposed 2004 Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) budget of \$30,854,971 for the consideration of messengers attending the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) on October 29-30 at First Church, Jackson.

The proposed budget, which was also passed earlier in the day by the board's executive committee and is reprinted on page four of this issue, represents a 2.34% reduction from the board's record 2003 budget of \$31,592,787.

Bobby Kirk, chairman of the board's budget committee and a member of Roundaway Church in Mid-Delta Association, said the 2004 budget reduction is based on the best available analyses of giving patterns and the overall conditions of the Mississippi and U.S. economies.

As of the first of September, the 2003 Mississippi CP budget was below needs by 4.29%, due to a 2.52% drop in giving when compared to the previous year. Some economic experts and policymakers have expressed concerns that the country's struggle for economic recovery may continue through 2004.

The results of a survey of Baptist state convention budgets recently conducted by Mark Wingfield, associate editor of The Baptist Standard in Texas, revealed that ongoing budget battles have been

extremely challenging for many state conventions. The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina recently announced a budget shortfall of seven percent and personnel cutbacks that will amount to 20% of all budgeted positions. The Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Missouri Baptist Convention are more than 10% behind budget, with the Tennessee Baptist Convention nearing the 10% mark, according to Wingfield's report.

Southern Baptist Convention entities have also suffered through budget cuts and personnel reductions this year, including the International Mission Board in Richmond, Va., and the North American Mission Board in Atlanta.

In other business, the executive committee approved the redirection of slightly more than \$21,000 from the Church Revitalization Study Committee to the new Church and Community Impact Department, which sprang from the committee's final report. The committee completed its work late last year and disbanded.

Barri A. Shirley, MBCB associate executive director for resource services, reported to the executive committee that the board was debt-free as of May 31, having paid off the \$2.6 million loan taken out in 2000 to finance improvements at Mississippi Baptist encampments.

The executive committee and the full board also heard a proposed amendment to the MBC's constitution from the trustees of the Mississippi Baptist



Foundation that would allow the Foundation to assess cost recovery charges for assets managed by the Foundation. The proposed amendment will be presented at the MBC's 2003 annual

session where, according to constitutional procedures, it will be referred to the convention's constitution and bylaws committee for a report and subsequent vote at the 2004 annual session.

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WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

NAMB to cut jobs

Directions

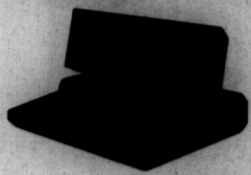
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A distant memory

The horrific event that burned the numerals 9/11 into our minds forever is now two years distant. At least it should be burned into our minds forever, unless we want to revisit the same trauma delivered a thousand different ways by people who seek to destroy our way of life and — more importantly — wipe Christianity from the face of the earth.

In the two years since the United States suffered its first and worst foreign attack on home soil since the War of 1812, not much has changed. A just-released report from the federal General Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative arm of the U.S. Congress, revealed that investigators from that agency were able to obtain driver's licenses in seven states and the District of Columbia every single time they used faked documentation.

In some cases, driver's license personnel pointed out the flaws in the documentation — mismatched birth dates on Social Security forms, no official seals on birth certificates — and handed the fakes back to the erstwhile applicants. The investigators left, corrected the mistakes on the fakes, returned, and obtained licenses the same day.

In what must have looked like a bad comedy skit, one of the undercover investigators offered to take a vision test that had been inadvertently failed by another undercover investigator. When the second agent passed the test, he stepped back and allowed the first agent to finish the application process in full view of driver's license personnel. The pair of agents was never questioned by driver's license workers who witnessed the whole scam.

Other reports indicate that our borders are as porous as ever, while utilities and infrastructure are as vulnerable as before 9/11. The historic blackout a few weeks ago in the northeast U.S. and southern Canada proved that fact. The security situation at airports isn't much better, with television reporters getting through checkpoints with weapons and the federal government hiring felons to staff those checkpoints.

Meanwhile, Americans have begun to pay scant attention to the unnecessarily-complex system of color coded threat

alerts. How many people know at which color we currently reside? How many fewer people know what actions to take for each threat level?

Even more troubling are surveys that indicate Americans are less concerned about the general security of the nation than at any time since before the 9/11 attacks. While no one wants to give up constitutionally-guaranteed civil liberties, we should all realize that heightened security in the wake of past and planned future terrorist attacks will involve some inconvenience on our part. Sometimes we'll have to take off our shoes at the airport and allow our feet to be inspected. It's no big deal. Really.

If America is to survive — not to mention western civilization — we'd better start getting serious. Our enemies have designs on acquiring biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons of mass destruction, and they are perfectly willing to use those weapons on men, women, and children who don't share their radical religious views.

We better get serious about protecting ourselves and our way of life because western civilization has been the bulwark of Christianity for a long time. If Islamist terrorists are able to topple the liberal democracies of western civilization, the Christian faith will lose its strongest defenders.

Isn't that really the goal of Islamist extremists? There's all the noble talk of driving the infidels from Palestine and forcing the Americans from Muslim lands, but at the core is a literal campaign to destroy Christianity.

Of course, they won't succeed. In 2,000 years, no one has succeeded — but a few madmen have come frighteningly close. If

"THE REASON YOU'VE NOT SEEN US IN CHURCH LATELY IS WE'VE MOVED OUR MEMBERSHIP TO THE PSYCHIC FRIENDS NETWORK!"



we don't want that to happen again, we're going to have to resist the rising tide of fanaticism wherever it threatens our way of life with all our resources.

The most powerful among the many resources we have at our disposal is prayer. Let us pray for the deliverance of every soul of earth, even the souls of our enemies and those who would do us harm. Let us humble ourselves and pray for our deliverance as we face these madmen. May even our bitterest enemies see Christ reflected in us. We so very much need God at this crucial time.

If 9/11 taught us anything, we should now understand the enemy, the threat they pose, and the consequences should they succeed. He who forgets history...

GUEST OPINION:

The view from Montgomery

By E.C. Martin, member
Old Silver Creek Church, Silver Creek

Coalition, whom I think of as Nicodemus. Mahoney seems more sure of himself than what I read of Nicodemus: more fire and zeal, an impressive man.

Then another man was escorted front and center with law officers fore and aft. This man had a large part in creating such a stir. He is a man who would not lay aside his beliefs and principals in an Almighty God; a man in whom you think you see the face of Christ; a man unjustly accused and about to be tried and sentenced; a man standing alone when you consider the mass number of professing Christians in this land

and see the small number gathered to support him.

This man is Judge Roy Moore, who is responsible for the placing of the monument in the Great Hall and who I'm certain is a child of the King and a persecuted brother of Christians around the world.

It's a strange feeling you get when you walk up the large stone steps and look through the glassed front at this piece of granite. I believe similar feelings were felt at Pilate's Porch 2,000 years ago. What angers me so is that most believers seem to be asleep and blind now just as they were then. I

find it odd that so many news crews are present but so little is heard about this event. It rings to mind the hush-hush of the persecutors of Our Lord. I cannot understand why the leaders of the church are so still and silent as this unfolds and we witness another trial and persecution of Our Lord.

I believe if the people of this nation sit silent and allow this to take place, it will be the beginning of the end of free worship in America and the destruction of what was once the greatest of nations. My prayer is that He awakens his sleeping children before it's too late. I ask that you call your senators and church leaders, tell a brother or sister in another church, and for a change make a wave — preferably a large one! I believe thousands should be seen in the streets of Montgomery as a witness to the backsliding politicians of this nation. I believe the church needs a show of voting force in the headlines and on the evening news.

Students FiSHING for friends, classmates

SAN DIEGO (BP) — With his bleached hair and athletic build, high school sophomore Curtis Duncan looks like he'd be more comfortable surfing than talking about Jesus at school — and he'll admit his nerves are jangled because he's about to share the Gospel in front of 80 of his fellow Mira Mesa High School students.

Curtis has never done anything like this before but here he is, antsy, pacing back and forth, choking down a piece of pizza before he speaks at the Solid Rock Christian Club's monthly outreach meeting.

"I sort of got chosen, but it was my choice to do it, too," Curtis says with a nervous smile. The club meets Tuesdays during lunch at the San Diego school in Mr. Van Grove's

geometry classroom. Today, partially lured by 20 large pizzas and invitations from club members, the room is packed with students who enjoy a frenetic lunch, then look keenly at Curtis.

The Solid Rock Christian Club has been meeting at Mira Mesa for more than 15 years but in the past year, club leaders say they've seen God work like never before. Van Grove, the club's sponsor, says he's never seen kids so boldly view their campus as a mission field.

The student leaders attribute the growth of their club to God — and to FiSH. Not the scaly, gilled, swimming kind of fish, but a catchy strategy to help

student-run Bible clubs plan meetings. One of the Solid Rock Club's goals is to provide fellowship for Christians on the 2,400-student public school campus. Stephanie Kiper, the club's co-president, says she's personally benefited from the

These days, God's faithfulness has allowed the club to be "a really big witness on campus," says Dawn, a member of First Church, Mira Mesa. "Other people know who the Christians are now."

Stephanie says she hopes the club can bring God to the cam-

which usually involves a guest speaker like a local youth pastor. S is for "Share" week which entails a student being in charge of the meeting by leading a Bible study or sharing his or her testimony. Finally, H stands for "Hook." "The last week is the big one," Dawn says, "because it's during the Hook meeting that a Christian student shares the Gospel and invites other people to enter a personal relationship with Jesus Christ."

Curtis' nerves didn't get the best of him that day in Mr. Van Grove's classroom. In fact, the sincerity of his presentation communicated vastly more than his uneasiness. His primary theme could be summed up in three words: "God changes lives." Curtis has seen it, experienced it and there he was sharing it.



READY TO FiSH — FiSH strategy leaders at Mira Mesa High School in San Diego see their school as their mission field. Those leaders include (from left) Dawn Kobierski, Arthur Cachero, Stephanie Kiper, and Charlie Chambers. (BP photo by Junior Fangon and Marshall Allen)

club because it provides her with spiritual accountability.

"When I was in junior high I really didn't know any Christians," she says. "[At Solid Rock], I met more Christians who helped keep me in check. I am more aware that I'm with other Christians and that I need to get right with God."

The club's mission also includes evangelism, especially as its influence grows and it gets more noticed on campus. Last year's co-president, Dawn Kobierski, recounts that at first the Solid Rock Christian Club was flying under the radar at Mira Mesa. It was so unknown, Dawn says, that people thought it was for rock-climbers.

pus by drawing students who wouldn't normally come to church. "It's [our goal] to reach out to our school and be a shining light there." Before FiSH, the message of Jesus was never heard, she says. "[FiSH] has helped that message be heard and developed a reason to invite non-Christian friends to come."

In the FiSH strategy, students — not adults — always share the Gospel with the club, and club leaders say it's better that way. "It's stronger if students share their own faith," says Arthur Cachero, co-president of the club with Dawn last year. "It shows students, too, can do it, and that students can live their lives for Christ."

FiSH is an acronym where each letter stands for a theme in a four-week cycle of meetings. F stands for "Focus," a kickoff meeting which helps Christian students get on track with God through student-led prayer and worship. I stands for "Inspiration," a meeting

Before God transformed Curtis' family, things looked bleak. His parents had separated and Curtis was sent to live with his grandparents. Then a neighbor shared Christ with Curtis' dad, which set off an exciting chain of events. Curtis' dad got back together with his mom and both of them became Christians.

"That's just one way of God working in my life," Curtis said proudly, standing at the front of the classroom. "He brought my mom and dad back together. They're more in love now than ever... God can and will change lives."

Curtis then talked about how his relationship with God has changed his own life. Once a bully, he says he is now known as a person that's almost "too nice." He's experienced the power and joy of the Holy Spirit at such depths that it's moved him to tears. "It's the first time in my life I've ever cried because I was happy."

Looking back

10 years ago

President Bill Clinton agrees to meet with two Southern Baptist leaders in the White House. Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President Ed Young and SBC Executive Committee President Morris Chapman will meet with the president for at least a half-hour.

20 years ago

Mississippi Baptists are "right on target" in meeting budget estimates for gifts to the Cooperative Program in 1983, according to Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. August gifts were 41.6% higher than the previous year.

50 years ago

Wayne Coleman, serving as interim pastor of First Church, Natchez, during the illness of Pastor W. A. Sullivan, is called as pastor after Sullivan's death. Sullivan had pastored the Natchez church for 25 years.



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THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

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Churches open Sundays

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Family Christian Stores has announced that it will begin opening its outlets on Sunday. Family Christian's new policy of Sunday sales is being launched with its 17 Dallas-area stores and will be implemented nationwide this fall, according to the company's chief executive, Dave Browne. The Dallas Morning News reported Aug. 29. The Dallas stores' first Sunday for business was Aug. 24 and the policy will move forward on a market-by-market basis. Jeff Lambert, a spokesman for the chain, told Baptist Press Sept. 4. Family Christian Stores' Sunday hours will be noon to 5 p.m. The company operates five stores in Mississippi: on County Line Road in Jackson, on Robinson Road in Jackson, at Belhaven College in Jackson, on Highway 49 in Gulfport, and on Goodman Road in Southaven. Wayne Coleman, a leading evangelical theologian, has been a study for Family Christian Stores about the business move by the privately owned Family Christian Stores, an official of the Southern Baptist-owned retail chain based in Nashville said that LifeWay stores would remain closed on Sunday.

Proposed 2004 Cooperative Program Budget

	2003 Budget	2004 Budget	Percent of Total	Dollar Incr/Decr	Percent Incr/Decr
Southern Baptist Convention					
Southern Baptist Convention Budget Formula:					
SBC Operating	366,476	357,918	1.16%	(8,558)	(2.34%)
International Mission Board	5,528,738	5,399,620	17.50%	(129,118)	(2.34%)
North American Mission Board	2,521,104	2,462,227	7.98%	(58,877)	(2.34%)
Annuity Board	85,301	83,308	0.27%	(1,993)	(2.34%)
SBC Seminaries	2,391,574	2,335,721	7.57%	(55,853)	(2.34%)
Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission	164,282	160,446	0.52%	(3,836)	(2.34%)
Total	11,067,475	10,799,240	35.00%	(268,235)	(2.34%)
Shared Responsibilities -MBC Matching Portion					
Church Annuity	980,000	951,436	3.08%	(28,564)	(2.91%)
Total	980,000	951,436	3.08%	(28,564)	(2.91%)
Mississippi Institutions and Agencies					
Baptist Children's Village	515,042	515,042	1.67%	0	0.00%
Board of Ministerial Education	389,560	380,444	1.23%	(9,116)	(2.34%)
Christian Action Commission	315,825	308,435	1.00%	(7,390)	(2.34%)
Christian Education	5,374,847	5,249,076	17.01%	(125,771)	(2.34%)
Christian Education Capital Needs	682,248	666,283	2.16%	(15,965)	(2.34%)
Historical Commission	61,773	60,328	0.20%	(1,445)	(2.34%)
Mississippi Baptist Foundation	417,314	407,549	1.32%	(9,765)	(2.34%)
Mississippi Baptist Health Systems					
Baptist Memorial Health Systems (1/3 owned by MS)					
Total	7,756,609	7,587,157	24.59%	(169,452)	(2.18%)
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board					
Baptist Record	654,172	662,762	2.15%	8,590	1.31%
Church & Community Impact	0	178,287	0.58%	178,287	-
Church Growth	389,407	215,688	0.70%	(173,719)	(44.61%)
Church Music	431,124	451,260	1.46%	20,136	4.67%
Church Planting	673,899	571,111	1.85%	(102,788)	(15.25%)
Church-Minister Relations	270,218	275,431	0.89%	5,213	1.93%
Collegiate Ministry	1,612,654	1,639,981	5.32%	27,327	1.69%
Communication Services	487,409	417,198	1.35%	(70,211)	(14.40%)
Computer Information Services	339,964	321,108	1.04%	(18,856)	(5.55%)
Convention & Convention Committees	105,350	101,100	0.33%	(4,250)	(4.03%)
Discipleship & Family Ministry	683,022	685,997	2.22%	2,975	0.44%
Evangelism	240,171	215,898	0.70%	(24,273)	(10.11%)
Executive Administration	437,508	434,624	1.41%	(2,884)	(0.66%)
Gulfshore Assembly	523,596	498,992	1.62%	(24,604)	(4.70%)
Men's Ministry	533,755	545,493	1.77%	11,738	2.20%
Missions Mobilization	450,000	450,000	1.46%	0	0.00%
Missions Strategy	543,144	518,323	1.68%	(24,821)	(4.57%)
Pastor/Leadership Development	299,242	292,964	0.95%	(6,278)	(2.10%)
Resource Services/Acct. & Pers. Services/Annuity	715,688	719,486	2.33%	3,798	0.53%
Stewardship	222,788	213,818	0.69%	(8,970)	(4.03%)
Sunday School	593,274	615,293	1.99%	22,019	3.71%
Synergized Relationships / Teams	100,800	115,000	0.37%	14,200	14.09%
Woman's Missionary Union	827,118	825,924	2.68%	(1,194)	(0.14%)
Youth Weeks	64,400	51,400	0.17%	(13,000)	(20.19%)
Capital Needs	600,000	500,000	1.62%	(100,000)	(16.67%)
Total	11,798,703	11,517,138	37.33%	(281,565)	(2.39%)
Total Cooperative Program Budget	31,592,787	30,854,971	100.00%	(737,816)	(2.34%)
Challenge Portion Percentages:					
Christian Education		50%			
International Missions		25%			
New Church Starts in MS		25%			

NAMB joins states in cutting budget, jobs

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — The North American Mission Board (NAMB) proposed budget for 2004 will be six percent less than the current year's budget, forcing the board to reduce staff and program support. The proposed budget eliminates 31 positions, seven of which are currently filled by employees who will not be offered other positions or retirement.

Several Southern Baptist state conventions have announced similar cutbacks including staff layoffs over the past few months, including the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina which announced Aug. 26 it was cutting 20% of budgeted positions. The International Mission Board in June eliminated 61 full- and part-time positions affecting 37

employees. The stated reasons in most cases were higher expenses and flat or declining mission offerings.

"These have been the most difficult decisions we've had to make during NAMB's six years of existence," said NAMB President Robert E. "Bob" Reccord, who met with employees on Aug. 28 at NAMB's headquarters in Alpharetta, Ga.

The proposed budget will be mailed to NAMB trustees in early September. Trustees will consider the budget during their regular board meeting Oct 8.

Reccord said based on giving history and trends, NAMB's financial team projects the board's income next year will be \$7.2 million less than the 2003 budget — nearly a six percent decrease.

Randy Singer, NAMB executive vice president, explained that although income from the Cooperative Program and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, which comprise more than 75% of NAMB's income, have increased incrementally over the past several years, those increases have barely kept pace with inflation.

"We're so thankful for the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Offering, but, when adjusted for inflation, both have been virtually flat several years which means the purchasing power has remained the same during that time," Singer said.

"Due primarily to the impact of the sluggish economy on our investment income, NAMB has not reached income projections four of the last five years," he said.

BELIEFS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

What you believe does make a difference! Beliefs shape our lives — short-term, long-term, and eternally. The other day I saw a tag on the front of a pick-up truck that started some wheels turning in my brain. The tag said, "Everyone needs to believe in something...I believe I will have another beer." Now, I didn't get to meet the guy who owned the truck and I refused to let myself speculate or stereotype what he or she might be like; but one thing is for sure, whoever it was thought they had found the wonderful answer for all of life's pertinent problems and had laid a foundation from which they could solve all of life's perplexities — drink another beer!

Now, the person who put that tag on the truck may have just been trying to be cute; but, in fact, there are a whole range of self-serving, "make-me-feel-good-for-the-moment," "drown-my-problems-in-some-solution," and "let me get on with life without any worries," beliefs. The real problem with believing in something like that is that it holds no real answers, either short-term or long-term. There has got to be something better to believe in and there is!

As you consider what you are going to believe in, let me suggest a few things that you might ought to weigh heavily as you pick your belief system, or even a person to believe in:

One thing to consider is ethics. Ethics has to do with right and wrong, good and



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

bad, and whatever you believe in ought to lead to good. Well, the interesting thing about the tag on that truck is that, as a general rule, over the long-haul, that belief leads to one bad thing after another: the dissipation of life, the ruination of health, the destruction of relationships, the possibilities of hurting someone else, and on and on and on it goes. Hence, the more beer, the more burdens!

However, biblical belief in a God who sent His Son to die for us leads to one step after another toward life being better. He came to give life and to give it more abundantly. Now, that doesn't mean just more days, and it doesn't mean just enjoying life more. It means life in its best form — life in a good way, in a right way, and in a healthy and productive way. Jesus did not just come to this world to bring us an ethical system of living, but His quality of living leads to right, ethical actions. What you believe in ought to do that.

A second consideration that ought to be given is to echoes. Now, what I mean when I say echoes is referring mainly to your children, offspring, or even those who live

within the circle of your influence. Life is pretty much built that way in what you do and send out comes back to you — like, yelling into a canyon and the echo of your own voice comes bouncing back toward you. What you say is what you get!

In life, the belief system that you believe in is pretty much the belief system that is going to be picked up on by your children. No wonder the writer of Proverbs said, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." He is instructing us to live the kind of life that we want to see reproduced in our children.

It is rather fascinating when we think we are teaching our children one thing, while they are picking up on our belief system about other things. For instance, we want to encourage them to excel and do well at school, in sports, or in the development of their talents, and then we wonder why things seem to go so wrong when they pick up on what we believed about having a rotten attitude when we don't get our way; or why they can't have good relationships with people when we believe that everyone is trying

to take advantage of us and we must keep our guard up and demand our rights; or, why they don't seem to learn well when we have taught them our belief system is that the most important thing to do is to take advantage of the system and manipulate people. After a while, we hear the echo of our own life. We are reminded that what we do is important, but what we believe is vital, for it bleeds into everything we do.

The last consideration I would offer you to think about related to our beliefs is eternity. Our beliefs reach beyond the here and now and the momentary feelings. Like it or not, or believe it or not, what you believe directly determines your eternity. Probably the best known verse in Scripture is John 3:16 and it very pointedly and plainly declares our eternity and it is laced to our beliefs — "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever..." and there is the word, "believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Beliefs do matter! So, what do you do about what you believe? Follow the directions of the Apostle Paul when he declared, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." You can believe in the things of this world and put your belief in those things that will only give you gain momentarily, masking the issues of life; or, you can find your belief anchored in someone — Jesus — who provides for not only the here and now, but forever.

B&H to offer New Testaments for military

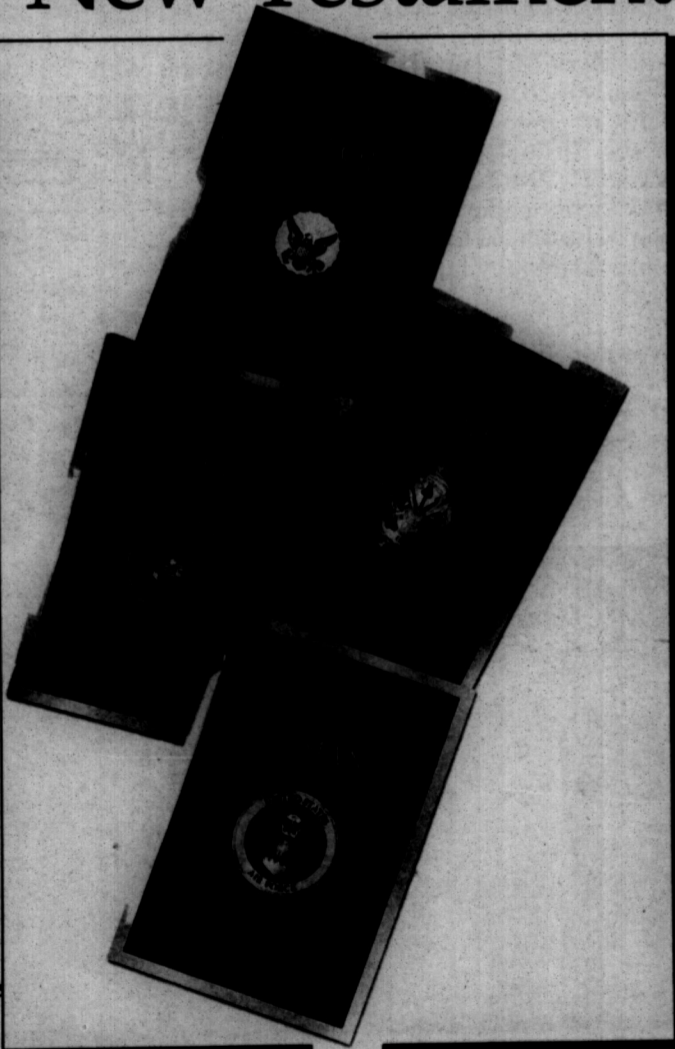
NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — They have their own uniforms. They have their own songs. They even have their own heroes. Now Broadman & Holman (B&H) is offering them their own Bibles.

B&H, the trade book and Bible publishing division of LifeWay Christian Resources, has released the Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB) Military New Testament with Psalms and Proverbs.

The Bible, available in four editions — one for each branch of the armed forces — will be stamped with the official seal of the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U. S. Air Force or U.S. Marines, said Ricky King, B&H product development manager.

"As the oldest Bible publisher in America, we have been a longtime beneficiary of the sacrifices of many men and women who pledged to guard and protect our country's freedom," King said. "We want to honor those in our armed services in a way that will strengthen their faith and bring lasting hope and encouragement to them and their families."

The HCSB Military New Testament with Psalms and Proverbs has a bonded leather cover stamped with an official seal of the Army, Navy, Air Force or Marines, he said. It comes in a gift box specific to each branch of service.



All editions feature the Holman Christian Standard Bible translation, the plan of salvation, the Pledge of Allegiance, lyrics to patriotic songs like "America the Beautiful" and prayers and quotations from U.S. presidents ranging from George Washington to George W. Bush.

Each branch-specific edition will contain its own unique content as well, King said. For example, the Air Force version includes the testimony of late actor Jimmy Stewart, who served during World War II and a prayer from World War I hero Eddie Rickenbacker. The Marine version includes distinct prayers and hymns as well as testimonial from highly decorated officers such as Lt. Col. Oliver North, who is also a best-selling B&H author.

B&H began developing the new HCSB translation in the mid 1990s. Part of a seven-year, \$10 million project, the entire translation (Old and New Testaments) will be completed this year, though it won't be released to the public until spring 2004. However, as a way to introduce the Bible to Southern Baptists, LifeWay is using it in Sunday School curriculum this fall.

Established in 1738, LifeWay's Holman Bible Publishers division is also the largest publisher of Spanish-language Bibles in the United States.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

The music ministry of First Church, Laurel, presents Greg Buchanan, harpist, in concert September 18 at 7 p.m. Randy Turner, pastor, and Jimmy Little, minister of music, invite the public to attend. Admission is free. An offering will be taken.



Greg Buchanan

East Forest Church, Forest, will hold a Bible Preaching Conference September 13. Breakfast will be served at 8:30 a.m. and the conference time is 9 a.m.-5 p.m. A noon meal will be served. Frank Morgan is pastor. Gerald Waldrop, Randolph, will lead music. Preachers will be called on from the floor. All are welcome. For more information, call Randall Creel at (601) 469-0128.

Ray Boltz will be in concert at First Church, Natchez, November 8 at 7 p.m. and November 9 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$10. For more information, call (601) 442-1464.

First Church, Jackson, will host the Annual Church Library Ministry Conference October 3-4. The conference begins Friday at 9 a.m. and lasts through Saturday at noon. Registration is required. For more information, contact Ian Richardson, State CLM Director, MBCB, (601) 292-3378 or 1-800-748-1651.

The 1st-6th grade classes of North Carrollton Church, Carrollton, recently participated in Christmas in August, a nation-



GAs of North Carrollton Church, Carrollton

wide ministry project for North American missionaries. They chose Ella McCarroll, chaplain at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, Texas. She requested stuffed lambs to use to minister of premature and critically ill babies. Pictured (from left, front) are Jordan Haynes, Maggie Lloyd, Ann Marie McClain, Laynee Claire Marchant, Lindsey Ricks, (back) Jade Wrenn, Morgan Clark, Katie Ricks, Taylor Brower, and Ashley Barry.

The GAs of North Carrollton Church, Carrollton, were recently honored with a Recognition Program. They received patches for various missions projects throughout the year and charms with bracelets for completing the required World Venture lessons. Pictured (from left, front) are Taylor Brower, Laynee Claire Marchant, Lindsey Ricks, Maggie Lloyd, Ann Marie McClain, (back) Robin Keels, MBCB, GA/Acteens Consultant of the Mississippi WMU, Katie Ricks, Jade Wrenn, Julia McClellan, Morgan Clark and Ruth Woods, leader of North Carrollton Church WMU. GA leaders are Debbie Clark and Sissy Lloyd.

The Mission Friends of First Church, Greenville, recently gathered gifts for the Edwina Robinson Special Day Offering. Each week the children put money in their piggy banks for

various mission offerings. They decorated envelopes and brought extra for the special day offering. Pictured are the Mission



Mission Friends of First Church, Greenville

Friends with Sharon Neff, WMU director, and Eva Britton, leader.

The youth of Holly Church, Corinth, recently had a weekend of worship, fellowship, and fun in Jackson. They attended the youth conference and enjoyed a water park. Tony Morrow is pastor.

Parkway Church, Tupelo, celebrated their 50th year of min-



Gregory, Alford, Shirley, and Brashier

istry on August 24. Pictured (from left) are the former pastors in attendance Mark Gregory, Jim Alford, Robert Shirley, and current pastor, Paul Brashier.

The Favorite Few special education Sunday School Class sponsored by First Church, McComb, recently participated in a week long Bible School. Retired local pastor, Bob Lunch is shown with the group after he presented the morning devotional, Pleasing God by Helping Others, the week's theme.

First Church, Terry, exceeded their goal for the Annie Armstrong Offering to support North American Missions by giving a total of \$5,322.85. John H. Pace Jr. is pastor.

First Church, Terry, increased their annual gift given to support The Baptist Children's Village by giving \$2,760.93. The amount included \$824.12 given by the children at VBS during their weekly offering and their Coin War.

First Church, Jackson, will hold an informational lunch regarding the World Wide

Perspectives Course on September 16 at 11:30 a.m. An informational supper will also be held at 6 p.m. Meals are complimentary and will be held in the Christain Life Center. First Church, Jackson, will host the actual course beginning January 20, 2004. To reserve a place, contact Erin Ulerich at 601-968-5945 or eulrich@belhaven.edu by September 11.



Youth of Holly Church, Corinth



Favorite Few of First Church, McComb

NAMES IN THE NEWS



Standing Pine Church Deacon Ordination, Walnut Grove

Standing Pine Church, Walnut Grove, held a deacon ordination service on August 17. Pictured (from left) are Ben Johnson, Jim Burns, pastor, and Bill Greer.

Liberty Church, Toomsaba, recently held a child dedication for Gavin Dewayne Thomas and Gracelyn Elaine Gibson. Pictured (from left) are Donald and Carol Thomas with Gavin, and Josie and Michael Gibson, pastor, with Gracie and Brady.

Antioch Church, Leakesville, ordained Mickey McLendon to the ministry on June 29. McLendon serves as pastor of East Salem Church, Greene. Pictured (from left) are his wife Tammie and McLendon.

Tylertown Church, Tylertown, presented a plaque to Dewey and Pat Martin during an

Associational mission trip report on July 27 for their faithful service for coordinating and participating in many mission trips. Pictured (from left) are Michael W. Glenn, pastor, and the Martins.

IMB missionaries, Ray and Cindy Hodgins, recently finished language school at the University of Costa Rica. The couple is now serving in Montevideo, Uruguay. Prior to going into



Mickey & Tammie McLendon



The Hodgins Family

(from left) are Jim Harrington, Associational Missions

the mission field, Ray was the youth minister Poplar Springs Drive Church, Meridian. Pictured are the Hodgins with their children.

Clark Hicks was honored August 17 by Quincy Church, Monroe, for fifty years of ministry. Pictured

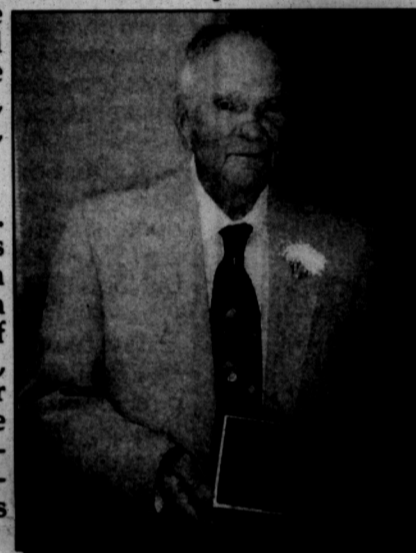


Liberty Church Child Dedication, Toomsaba

Director, and Hicks with his wife, Winona.

Three youth from Macedonia Church, Petal, have surrendered their lives to the ministry. Pictured (from left) are Mat Woods, Aaron Bolling, and Jason Smith.

On July 27, J. W. Cubit was presented a plaque by Ben Presnell, pastor of Union Church, Union Church, for his service to the church and community. The occasion was Cubit's 88 birthday.



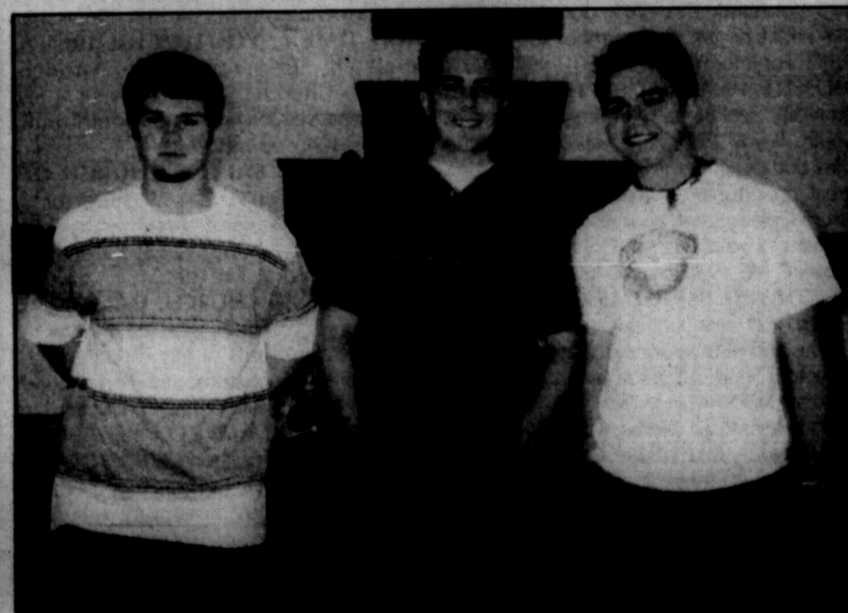
J.W. Cubit



Michael Glenn, pastor and Dewey & Pat Martin



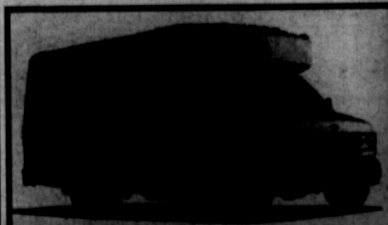
Jim Harrington, AMD; Clark and Winona Hicks



Mat Woods, Aaron Bolling, and Jason Smith

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HOMEcomings & REVIVALS

Heucks Retreat, Brookhaven: Sept. 21-24; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Bill Wright, speaking; Dale Heard, music.

Bolton, Bolton: Sept. 21; worship, 11 a.m.; a covered dish lunch will follow; gospel singing, 2 p.m.; Cliff Nelson, pastor.

Calvary, Pascagoula: Sept. 14-17; Sunday, 11 a.m., lunch will follow, and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon and 7 p.m.; Harold Carman, evangelist; Chris Turner, First Natchez, music; Johnny Beaver, pastor.

Longview, Pontotoc: Sept. 21; 120th anniversary; all are welcome; Johnny Sykes, pastor.

Sandy Hook, Marion: Sept. 14; 100th anniversary; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; a covered dish will be served at noon; new facilities tours will follow; Jerry Passmore, former pastor, speaking.

Cairo, Ecu: Sept. 14; worship, 10:30 a.m.; lunch at noon; afternoon singing with Heritage, 1 p.m.; Marty Browning, speaking; Bill Dowdy, pastor.

Westwood, Meridian: Sept. 14-17; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Mike Everett, ADM for Newton and Scott, preaching; Jeff Fields, worship leader; Richie Davis, pastor;

Chris Lee, worship minister.

Hillsboro, Forest: Sept. 21-24; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Brian Richardson, Castlewoods, Flowood, evangelist; Danny Harrison, Forest, music; Irene Martin, Forest, piano; Doug Pitts, pastor.

Brewer, Richton: Sept. 14-19; 7 p.m. nightly; Sonny Adkins, MBCB, evangelist; Bill Ricks, songleader; Ken Ball, pastor.

Union, Seminary: Sept. 21; 95th anniversary; worship, 10:30 a.m.; lunch will follow; all are welcome.

New Hope, Gulfport: Sept. 28-Oct. 3; Sunday, 10:30 and 6 p.m.; nightly, 7 p.m.; Tommy Mitchell, Gulf Coast Association, preaching; Becky Collins, music; Durwood Broughton, pastor; for more information, call (228) 832-1975.

Ramah, McCall Creek: Sept. 14-17; Sunday, 11 a.m.; 7 p.m. nightly; Wiley Reid, preaching; Jamall Badry, Colorado Springs, Colo., music; Gordan Coker, pastor.

Simpson County Youth Revival: Sept. 14-17 at First, Mendenhall; Sunday, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Adam Robinson, evangelist; Jason Elam, music.

STAFF CHANGES

Benton Church, Benton, has called **Charles James Moore** as pastor. Moore graduated from Mississippi College and NOBTS. He served as pastor of Gentilly Church, New Orleans, La., prior to coming to Benton.

Dale Funderburg has been called as pastor of First Church, West Point. Charles Dampeer completed a two year interim pastorate.

Dale Young, Pascagoula, was called as assistant youth director at Wade Church, Moss Point, on August 4. He attends Southeastern Baptist College, Laurel. Young has worked with youth at Michael Memorial Church, Gulfport, and Parkway Church, Moss Point. Philip Price is minister of youth and education.

ORGANIST, CASTLEWOODS Baptist Church. Send a letter of interest or resume to 175 Stonecastle Drive, Brandon, MS 39047, via email or fax. Fax number (601) 992-2623. For information call (601) 992-9977.

MOSELLE MEMORIAL BAPTIST Church is currently seeking a part-time minister of youth. If you feel God leading you in the direction of youth ministry and would like a great opportunity to work with a growing church, please send your resume to: MMBC minister of youth committee, P.O. Box 220, Moselle, MS 39459 or call (601) 582-9428.

NORTHWEST BAPTIST ASSOCIATION IN DeSoto and Tate counties is now taking applications and resumes for Association Missions Director. Send all information, including accurate references to Mr. Dan Freeman, 2604 Lavern Road, Nesbit, MS 38651.

CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH IN Meridian is looking for an organist. Interested persons should contact Dr. Chisholm by phone at (601) 693-4288 or email danny@cbcmodn.org.

FULL-TIME MINISTER OF STUDENTS position. Send resumes to minister of stu-

dents search committee, Grace Memorial Baptist Church, 2412 23rd Avenue, Gulfport, MS 39501.

PART-TIME YOUTH/CHILDREN'S Minister. Send resume to Antioch Baptist Church, 2350 Hwy 43 S., Brandon, MS 39042. Attn: youth minister search committee.

PROVIDENCE BAPTIST CHURCH OF Hattiesburg, Miss., is searching for a pastor. Please send resume to Mr. Lavon Williamson, 1282 Eatonville Rd, Hattiesburg, MS 39401.

FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH, JACKSON, is looking for a part-time associate minister to help meet the needs of this caring church with outreach programs and homebound ministry. For more information, contact Dr. Greg Wolfe, pastor, P.O. Box 13675, Jackson, MS 39236. Phone (601) 368-2983.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, SHANNON, is currently accepting resumes for the position of full-time pastor. Please send resumes to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 21, Shannon, MS 38868, attn: Danny Simmons.

OBITUARY



Wells

Zeno Mitchell Wells, 89, of Gautier passed away at his home on August 29.

Wells graduated from Clarke College, Mississippi College, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He preached for over 51 years pastoring several churches in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Wells served as Director of Missions for the Jackson County Baptist Association from 1968-1979. He was instrumental in developing a weekly radio bible study over WPMP, sponsored by Burnham Drugs, Moss Point. Wells also served as interim director of missions for the

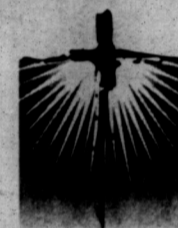
Gulf Coast Association and interim pastor for many Gulf Coast churches.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Thelma Steward Wells; two daughters, Thelma Patricia Herring and Sandra Mitchell Bolton; three sons, Zeno Randall Wells, Casey Wayne Wells, David Jerome Wells; two sisters, Vera Gatewood and Cleota Albritton; two brothers, Herman Douglas Wells and Glen Wells; six grandchildren; and four great grandchildren.

The visitation and funeral was held September 2 at First Church, Gautier, with interment following in the Pinecrest Cemetery.

Arrangements were made by Holder-Wells Funeral Home, Moss Point. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Jackson County Association.

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LEESVILLE - FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH: Full-time youth and recreation minister. Send resumes with photo to: Youth Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church of Leesville, P.O. Box 1568, 1400 Nolan Trace, Leesville, LA 71446; or email fbcleesville@wnonline.net.

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coordinators. *Celebrate The Family*, worship and conferences featuring singer, speaker, musical ventriloquist, Lee Pitts Spooner. Banquets, conferences, and retreats. For free video call (251) 660-7628.

WANTED: FULL-TIME ASSOCIATE pastor of music and youth. All interested send resumes to: Feliciana Baptist Church, P.O. Box 428, Clinton, LA 70722. Or call the church office at (225) 683-3066, or call pastor Tony Hand at (225) 938-4592.

CHRIST-CENTERED CHILDREN'S home with Presbyterian heritage in NE Mississippi providing long-term care for sibling groups seeks couples to serve as houseparents. Commitment to Christ and to children essential. Liberal benefit package. Contact Dr. Bob Schwanebeck at Palmer Home for Children. (662) 328-5704, extension 113 or bschwanebeck@palmerhome.org.

FIRST BAPTIST, MAYFIELD, KENTUCKY, is seeking full-time worship/music minister. Average attendance 500+. Blended worship style with Praise team. Position will give leadership to graded music program. 65 member praise choir team, and worship team, worship planning. Send resume to Bob Swift, pastor. First Baptist Church, 118 W. South Street, Mayfield, KY 42066.



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2. I want forgiveness for my
sins and freedom from eternal
death.
(I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose
from the grave to forgive my
sins and to restore my
relationship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ
into my life. From this time
on, I want to live in a loving
relationship with him.
(I receive Christ as my
Savior and Lord.)

But as many as received him, to
them he gave the right to become
children of God, even to those
who believe in his name
(John 1:12).

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Jesus Christ today, contact
a local Baptist church for
spiritual guidance.

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FIBERGLASS
SPECIALTIES
INCORPORATED

WHAT'S WRONG?

Editor:

You recently ran in your paper that Addie M. Holloway had 52 years of perfect attendance in Sunday School at Valley Park Church. What's the matter with her? Could it be nothing at all?

Doesn't she ever have company drop in on Sunday to keep her away from church? Doesn't she ever have a sick headache, cold, nervous spell, or tired run down feeling on Sunday morning? Doesn't she ever take off on the weekend to see someone?

Doesn't she ever sleep late on Sunday morning? Doesn't it ever rain or snow on Sunday morning? Doesn't she ever have her feelings hurt by someone in the church?

Doesn't she ever think that she knows the Bible and all there is to know? Doesn't she think that the music is too loud? Doesn't she just want to stay at home and listen to the radio or television? Doesn't she just want the younger generation to do all the teaching and serving God through the church?

There is nothing wrong with Addie Holloway. She realizes that you don't get too old to go to church. We could all learn a lot from her dedication to the Lord and to her church.

David Hulsey
Hattiesburg

MISSING INFO

Editor:

I am a member of First Church, Greenwood, and wanted to inform The Baptist Record of some missing information. The "unidentified volunteer" in the photo taken at the Sunflower literacy missions event (Literacy Missions Thriving in Mississippi, in the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering Special Edition, August 28) is Nancy McDaniel, also a long-time member and Sunday school teacher at First Church, Greenwood. She is a retired Greenwood Public Schools teacher. Also, seated to her right in the photo is her husband Dorsey, a volunteer for the missions work.

Jeanie Aden
Greenwood

HIT THE NAIL

Editor:

Tony Martin sure hit the nail on the head with his commentary of August 21 in The Baptist Record, regarding the Ten Commandments monument in Alabama. I have yet to read such a concise, well thought out opinion on any subject.

The Ten Commandments are and always have been the basis of law written in this country. The reason for this is

that by and large the founders of this nation were Christians and were devout in their beliefs. Everything done or written by this body was done in reverent prayer and given over to the power of God.

I think that Martin did a wonderful job of being fair and forthright in his opinions. He showed very well that Christianity was the driving force in the creation of the United States and that all were welcomed here with the complete freedom to believe as they wanted. If we're not careful, we will allow ourselves to become a state-mandated religion of mystic religiosity. We will be force-fed the idea that we all are to merge our thoughts of religion and God so that all are made to feel good and be able to do as they will without having feelings of guilt or anguish.

The one truth that must be understood by all is that we are to be guided by the laws of the one true God and must follow His commandments. By turning our back on Him, He will ultimately turn His back on us.

Vernon "Butch" Vaughn
Georgetown

COMPLAINT ABSURD

Editor:

I am a 29-year-old Christian, and I am saddened and appalled by what is happening in Montgomery, Alabama.

I believe in the Constitution, but I feel that the plaintiff's complaint that the Ten Commandments monument is a violation of their First Amendment rights is absurd. So many people seem to hide behind that argument when they don't want to acknowledge God's laws for His children. They think if they can get these laws hidden away from public view that these laws will cease to exist.

I am ashamed of the Alabama Supreme Court for playing their part in this fiasco. My family is originally from the state of Alabama. I thank God we don't live there right now, but if we did we would support Chief Justice Roy Moore. I hope the U.S. Supreme Court will not try to dodge this issue as they have in the past. I hope they can see through the transparency of these complaints.

It does my heart good to see Moore stand up for his convictions. I pray that God will give him the strength to see this situation through. I hope other Christians will band together and pray for this man and about this injustice to our rights. Our constitutional rights are just as important as anyone else's. I wish the Supreme Court would keep that in mind

when hearing the case. We have just as much right to have these displays as they have a right to their displays.
Rebecca Leigh Fortune
Pelahatchie

PUBLIC WITNESS

Editor:

I was very pleased with your editorial concerning our Christian witness in public schools (August 14 issue). I am the principal at J. Z. George High School in Carroll County. I am also the pastor of Liberty Church in Jefferson. I have been in the public school business for twenty-six years and have been preaching the Word of God for thirty-three. I have never had any problems because of my faith in Jesus Christ.

The law requires that the Pledge of Allegiance be recited each morning in every school in Mississippi. "Under God" is always included. We still open football games with prayer. I have cried with my kids, laughed with my kids, led my kids to the Lord, baptized my kids, married my kids, and buried my kids. I have never been questioned by anyone. Should I lose my job because of my faith, so what! God is just telling me he has another job for me somewhere else.

God led me to J. Z. George and God can lead me away, but I will never deny my God. I was in Florida one year looking for employment. The pastor of a church which sponsored a Christian school asked, "How can you be a Christian and teach in a public school?" I answered, "The problem is we do not have enough Christian teachers in public schools."

Too many of us are using the excuse of separation of church and state to deny our witness.

Paul Miller
Carrollton

BOLD STAND

Editor:

We are a Sunday School class of Christian women who were both inspired and encouraged by the bold stand you took in your recent editorial addressed to Britney Spears (A generation in need of role models, July 17). Your courage to speak out in such a way is most admirable yet, unfortunately, in short supply today. We appreciate and support your effort on behalf of your daughter as well as countless other young impressionable girls, and we strongly encourage you, if you have not already done so, to send your message directly to Britney. Perhaps you could even include an appropriate verse of Scripture as the Lord leads. Who knows but that you

might plant a seed in Britney's young life that would blossom and touch millions?

Stepping Stones SS class
First Church, Lucedale

WRITE REPS, SENATORS

Editor:

I read an article in The Baptist Record on July 10, written by Jimmy Porter and entitled, Is Gay Marriage Next? He said we all needed to write our representatives and senators. I did write to all in Mississippi and Washington, D.C., but I had to call them for addresses.

I wish you would run the article again. I urge you to list our senators' and representatives' names and addresses with this article. Like Porter said, we may not see it in our lifetime but what about our children? We set the example for our children and use God's Holy Word to do that.

Lisa Parr
New Albany

Editor's note: While space limitations prevent the republishing of Porter's article, the addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of Mississippi's U.S. representatives and senators are as follows:

Senator Thad Cochran
U.S. Senate
326 Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-5054
senator@cochran.senate.gov

Senator Trent Lott
U.S. Senate
487 Russell Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-6253
senatorlott@lott.senate.gov

Rep. Roger Wicker
U.S. House of Representatives
206 Cannon House
Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-4306
roger.wicker@mail.house.gov

Rep. Bennie Thompson
U.S. House of Representatives
2432 Rayburn House
Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-5876
ms2nd@hr.house.gov

Rep. Chip Pickering
U.S. House of Representatives
427 Cannon House
Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-5031
www.house.gov/writerep/

Rep. Gene Taylor
U.S. House of Representatives
2311 Rayburn House
Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-5772
www.house.gov/writerep/

For specific information on Mississippi legislators, contact the legislative switchboard in Jackson at (601) 359-3770.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

"Kingdom Attitudes"

Matthew 6:1-8, 12, 14-18

By Jon Daniels

Most people are concerned about outward appearances to some degree. We want to be sure that we are wearing the right clothes, are seen in the right places with the right people. In a recent Baptist Press article, Nathan Finn stated, "Americans are a vain people. We are far too fascinated with appearances. We spend exorbitant amounts of money on clothes and grooming supplies. We want to dress for success and hope our sharp image will 'seal the deal.' We are a shallow people." (Baptist Press, Tuesday, September 2, 2003).

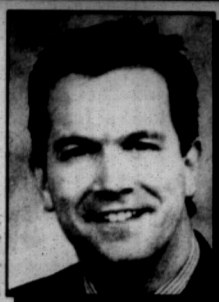
While outward appearances may have some place of importance in our lives, Jesus warns us to make sure that we are not performing outward spiritual practices to win the praise and approval of man. The spiritual disciplines of giving, praying,

forgiving, and fasting should be integral parts of our spiritual lives. Our greatest concern should be that God receives the glory from our lives in every way. In last week's Scripture, Jesus said, "Let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (5:16).

GIVE QUIETLY - 6:1-4.

A few years ago, a popular tennis player hawked a camera on a television commercial using the tagline, "Image is everything." That may be true when it comes to taking photographs, but in our giving, image is nothing.

Jesus had some stern words for those who make a show out of their giving habits (v. 1-2). They will be rewarded for their giving, but their reward will not come from God. Rather,



Daniels

they will receive the praise of men and that is all. He is very clear that they will "have no reward from [their] Father in heaven" (v. 1).

Our giving needs to be done in a quiet manner, in an attitude of worship and gratitude to God for His blessings. One writer said, "Giving is a personal act of worship, not a public demonstration for personal acclaim" (Cecil A. Ray, study note in Disciple's Study Bible). God sees our heart. He knows our motives. He rewards our faithfulness and humility.

PRAY INTIMATELY - 6:5-8.

Once again, Jesus exhorts His listeners not to make a show out of another spiritual discipline, prayer. He warned them not to pray like the "hypocrites" (v. 5) or like "idolaters" (v. 7). The hypocritical motive would be to pray to be seen by men, in places such as the street corners and synagogues. This is similar to that which was described once in a newspaper ad for a religious service, announcing, "The finest

prayer ever offered to a Boston congregation!"

In contrast to that type of hypocritical display, Jesus encouraged prayer time in an intimate, heartfelt communion with God. During this time of fellowship, we should avoid babbling, "meaningless repetition" (NAS). The Greek word here refers to idle, thoughtless chatter. One commentator noted, "Thoughtless prayer is almost as offensive to God as heartless prayer." (John MacArthur, Matthew 1-7, pg. 369). This does not mean that we should not bring repeated sincere requests before God. It does mean that mindless, thoughtless incantations and formulas are unnecessary and unspiritual.

FORGIVE GENUINELY - 6:12, 14-15.

Corrie Ten Boom once said, "If we forgive others, our hearts are made fit to receive forgiveness." Jesus made it clear that genuine forgiveness must be shown to others if we expect to receive forgiveness.

Many people wear bracelets that have the letters "W.W.J.D." on them ("What Would Jesus

Do?"). While there may be some circumstances that require some thought and consideration to determine what Jesus would do, granting forgiveness is a "no-brainer." He has forgiven us. The Greek word for "forgive" means literally "to hurl away." When we realize that God has "hurled" our sins away, we will be moved to forgive others.

FAST SECRETLY - 6:16-18.

In our world of "all you can eat buffets," fasting is not a discipline that is easily or regularly practiced. Yet Jesus seems to say that it should be a part of our lives, though we are not commanded to do it. "Whenever you fast" indicates that fasting is normal and acceptable in the Christian life.

"Genuine fasting is simply a part of concentrate, intense prayer and concern for the Lord, His will, and His work" (MacArthur, pg. 405). Don't do it to impress anyone. Do it secretly and sincerely, trusting that God sees and knows your heart.

Daniels is pastor of Monticello Church, Monticello.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Mutual Encouragers

Philippians 1:18b-30

By Laura Russell

Encouragement: That word leaps out of our Bible pages. It is a word that speaks to our mission as believers and it speaks very clearly and specifically. One of Paul's primary reasons for writing this letter to the Philippians was to encourage them to walk in a way worthy of the gospel of Christ. When we walk out into the world, we walk into an environment that automatically tears us down. Christians are not viewed with favor by our culture. Our beliefs are under attack. We get beaten up just going about our business. Therefore, we are called to encourage one another, to build each other up, so that we can go back out into the world and face the challenges all over again. This process must be the

goal of every believer. The Bible tells us to "build each other up" (Eph. 4:29) so the church must accept the responsibility to help one another grow in faith and cope with daily life and its problems. Encouraging one another helps us mature as believers and face life with hope. We need one another. We need each other's strength, help, encouragement, wisdom, warnings, and counsel. God wants us to practice the art of encouraging others. The most important place to do this is within the church.

Pray for others (vv18b-20). Through their prayers, the Philippians had encouraged Paul and as a result of this, he was even more determined to exalt Christ. Christians who pray for other believers encourage them to be more



Russell

faithful to Christ. Prayer unites us with others in the Body and united prayer is a mighty weapon that the Body of Christ is to use. Christian people must pray for others. To pray for others represents the highest form of Christian service. People must pray

and people must be prayed for. E.B. Bounds says that praying is a real business, not child's play, not a trivial matter, but a serious business. It is a process demanding the time, thought, energy, and hearts of mankind. It is our business to pray for others. Our praying concerns not only ourselves, but all people and their greatest interests, even the salvation of their souls. The work of the Lord, while on the earth, as well as the apostle Paul, was to develop people of prayer, to whom the future of the church would be committed. Paul, because of his praying habits and prayer lessons, is a

model to God's people in every age and every place.

Seek others' best (vv 21-26). Paul wanted to encourage the Philippians and was determined to do what was best for them. Christians encourage one another when they act on the interests of others and not their own selfish interests. Paul had a purpose for living when he served the Philippians and when he served others. Those who affect us the most watch out for themselves the least. They notice our needs and reach out to help, honestly concerned about our welfare.

Live by the Gospel and stand firm in the Gospel (vv 27a-30). We are to conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel. Paul challenged the Philippians to live according to the gospel. When we live by and stand firm in the gospel, we encourage other believers in their efforts to serve God. We are to fight side by side, contending for the faith. We are to maintain a common purpose to serve Christ. In the serving, there may be suffer-

ing. Paul considered it a privilege to suffer for Christ. While we do not naturally consider suffering a privilege, when we suffer for representing Christ, our example will have an effect on others. Suffering is a part of the human experience of living in a broken world. We can expect to suffer as part of living a life of faith. We should view suffering as a way of participating in Christ's glory. Throughout his life, Paul suffered for spreading the good news. The Philippians were encouraged by Paul and how he stood firm in his faith despite the hardships he faced. Likewise, we are encouraged when we see other believers stand firm in the gospel despite the struggles they face.

Paul shows us how to live successful Christian lives. We can become mature being so identified with Christ that His attitude of humility and sacrifice rules us. Christ is both our source of power and our guide.

Russell is member of First Church, McComb.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be in (a) typewritten, 12-point font on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (b) computer-generated font provided on a hard disk. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,



no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, McComb, MS 39205-0530, FAX: (601) 321-1111. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

Baptist relief workers wait for Iraq signal

AMMAN, Jordan (BP) — Nineteen Southern Baptist relief volunteers are waiting in Amman, Jordan, for the go-ahead to deploy to Baghdad to deliver to Iraqi families some of the 46,000 70-pound boxes of food gathered by Southern Baptist churches across the country this past spring.



Shipped in containers to various ports in the Middle East, the boxes were to have been housed in Baghdad until relief workers could deliver them to the most needy. At the end of August, those plans came to a halt when non-government organizations, at the advice of security officials in Iraq, said there were new safety concerns after escalating threats that could make relief workers "soft targets."

Most teams scheduled to travel to Iraq were forced to delay their itineraries until at least mid-September when the threat level is to be re-examined.

In an interview with the Florida Baptist Witness in Jordan, one of the relief workers said she is convinced God's hand has been on the trip all along, despite the last-minute changes and the long plane ride to Jordan.

Because she affirms the sovereignty of God, "I don't have any trouble with this," she said. "My one thought is to realize God's in charge of all of this and as long as I let Him order my steps I am where He wants me to be. I am going to 'Plan B.'"

Though she admitted to struggling with the probability she wouldn't be able to be one of the first in Iraq if she went to Jordan, the volunteer said, "It was never a question of, 'Will I go?' or 'Should I go?'"

"I don't only love the Iraqis living in Baghdad," she said. "If there is a way I can be God with skin on, then I'm not going to tell God, 'Only in this box.'"

The worker said her love for the Iraqi people began when she learned of the plight of the Kurds during the first Persian Gulf war.

"God just gave me a love for them and I have been praying for them all along," she said. "God wants worshipers in every place and if He has to start out with us worshipping God among those people, He'll get honor from that."

A Baptist worker coordinating the event, told the Witness Sept. 3 in Jordan that the volunteers — from Florida, Texas, Virginia and North Carolina — might have an opportunity to begin delivering food and supplies to the Iraqi refugees as early as Sept. 6, but details and logistics about the part this initial team will play continue to unfold.

The worker also said the food boxes scheduled for delivery in Jordan, unlike those in Iraq, will include an Arabic translation of the Book of Proverbs. The worker said there are fewer restrictions in Jordan than in the rest of the Arab world, and Proverbs is a biblical text that is accepted by Muslims.

The team was scheduled for orientation Sept. 4 and held a prayer vigil for the Iraqi people Sept. 5 in a location overlooking Iraq. Because Friday is considered a Holy Day in this mostly Muslim country, relief work was delayed until Sept. 6.

Meanwhile, west of Jordan in Baghdad, a Southern Baptist chaplain endorsed by the North American Mission Board, Captain Scott Riedel, told the Witness in a satellite phone interview Sept. 2 that he is appreciative of Southern Baptists' efforts to provide food to the needy Iraqis.

Assigned to the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment out of Fort Polk, La., Riedel, who has been in war-torn Iraq since June, said the persistence of Southern Baptists in showing love to the Iraqi people has not gone unnoticed.

"It makes me so proud to tell people I'm Southern Baptist," Riedel said. "You don't hear of any other denomination doing that. We are really leading from the front."

Commenting on the Iraqis' need for more than just the barest supplies, Riedel said he knows the 70-pound boxes, which contain enough staples to feed a family of five for a month, will begin to make an immediate difference.

"The Iraqi people really do love America and they love us tremendously," Riedel said.

During the wait, some boxes could with-in days be in the humble abodes of many of the 500,000 Iraqis who fled their country and are now living as refugees in Jordan.

'Edgy dude' bringing Gospel to young people

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP) — Carl Creasman is one edgy dude. Sporting an eyebrow ring and blond-streaked spiky hair, the 38-year-old doesn't look like the typical Southern Baptist minister. If you strike up a conversation with him and you'll quickly discover his passion for college students, biblical truth, and bringing the two together.

Creasman, a former student pastor at First Church in Winter Park, Fla., is a national youth communicator and founder of Numinous Ministries in Orlando, Fla. This fourth-generation minister has spent the last four summers teaching and ministering during Student Week sponsored by LifeWay Christian Resources at the Glorieta conference center in New Mexico.

His message to students is straightforward: If you say you believe in the Bible, know what it says. If you know what it says, live it, and never compromise.

"Carl has the pulse of today's college student," said Bill Wade, collegiate specialist for LifeWay. "He understands their heart and their culture. He'll meet anybody anywhere and instantly befriend them."

His passion for Generation X is evident when he talks about

the challenges that face the generation born roughly between 1962 and 1984.

"It's the nomad generation — the unwanted generation," Creasman said. Many of them "end up being the wild kids. ...Ask the 'hardcore Gen Xers' (age 23-27) and they'll say they barely knew or ever saw their parents."

Creasman admits that thanks to a rich spiritual heritage his own family life was much different. Though his faith was challenged growing up as he watched his father and the struggles he experienced in church ministry, a turning point came for Creasman when he had the opportunity as a college sophomore to hear Josh McDowell speak at Auburn University.

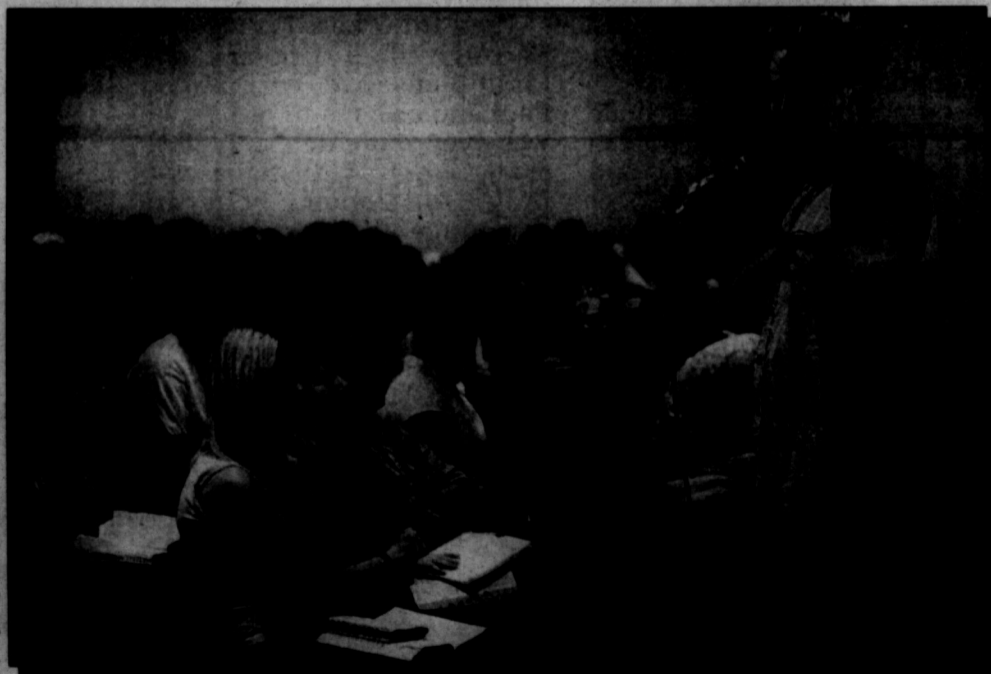
He also dug into the works of scholars such as C.S. Lewis and Dietrich Bonhoeffer and found a renewed belief in God. Six months later, "God put his hand on me," said Creasman,

who went on to complete two bachelor's degrees and two master's degrees in history and divinity at Auburn University and Southeastern Seminary, respectively.

"I want to be one of those guys where every decision I make, especially the big ones, I

ask the question, 'God, what do you want?'" Creasman said.

It is that gut belief that has spurred him to confront some hard issues about the church and Christians today, which resulted in a book waiting to be published titled, Letters from the Front Lines.



STUDENT WEEK SPEAKER — "How did Jesus define success? By the numbers? Absolutely not," said Carl Creasman, talking with a group of students who attended his workshop titled, "American Jesus?" during Student Week at LifeWay Glorieta Conference Center. (BP Photo by Kent Harville)

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Clue: A = P

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Romans 2:12